

# ASSESSMENT REPORT 2021

## ART315214 – ART STUDIO PRACTICE

Art Studio Practice provides an opportunity for students who have completed Art Production to continue their art practice at the TASC 3 level of complexity. It enables students to extend the depth and breadth of their studio practice within the context of creating and refining an exhibition proposal for a body of artwork and completing it to resolution.

The variety, scope and diversity of studio investigations undertaken each year remains impressive and this year there were some exceptional individual exhibitions of work with folios representing the following specialised studio areas; painting, drawing, print- making, mixed-media, photography (film and digital), ceramics, collage, graphic design, sculpture, video, digital art.

At state level it is encouraging to see a general level of consistency in the interpretation of the course content and work requirements with the majority of teachers and students demonstrating a clear understanding of criteria and standards. This is indicated by the quality of work and the substantial evidence produced particularly at the HA/EA standard.

Teachers and students are encouraged to refer to the TASC course document and external assessment guidelines when seeking further clarification of specific course requirements.

### Criterion 1: Design, Manage and Implement a Studio Exhibition

To be successful on this criterion, more attention to the written proposal content, format and its relevance to the final exhibition, must be considered. This year the standard of exhibition proposals varied in quality of content and presentation. As stated in previous reports the number of lengthy, over complex, and confusing proposals continues to compromise and let students down on this criterion.

Students and teachers are reminded to re-edit the proposals to ensure they are concise documents. They are not intended to be essays. In many cases the proposals exceeded the word count lacked clarity and appeared to contain the same content as the artist statement or consisted of entirely reflective statements and outline of technical processes.

Although a specific number of proposals is not mandated, providing evidence of the editing process by updating the document throughout the course is important to ensure it remains relevant and reflects the aims of the exhibition.

*It is not intended that the proposal be in essay form but rather as a plan and sequence of intentions – the ‘what’ ‘how’ and ‘why’ of the exhibition. The final proposal should use concise language and be approximately 500 words in length. The proposal is not an artist’s statement but a plan or series of intentions.’*

*The proposal is intended to be a focus statement of intention – an exhibition plan. As such it should be written in future tense and be amended to reflect changes during the year. It should be written in sentence form and include the following using simple concise language:*

- *Concept underpinning exhibition*
- *Context and influences*
- *Selection of materials and media*
- *Selection of techniques*
- *Scale of exhibition*
- *Design elements of the exhibition space - how it will be displayed*

### ***TASC External Assessment Guidelines***

To assist the external examination process students and teachers are asked to ensure the proposals are clearly visible and displayed on the wall or next to the display with another copy attached to their Major Research Paper. Drafts and re-edits to reflect changes in the development process should be dated and displayed with the reflective practice materials.

To maintain a consistent approach students and teachers are asked to ensure that proposal formats comply with the terminology as outlined in the course documents and to avoid confusing the issue by naming the proposal a ‘project outline’ or a ‘concept outline’ or an ‘exhibition abstract.’ The correct title should read; ‘Exhibition Proposal.’

Although not specified, the quantity of work produced must reflect the equivalent of 150 hours engagement in the course. A small number of folios provided insufficient evidence for 150 hours of practice. Some displays were repetitive and formulaic in approach and were compromised by a lack of variety and diversity to the detriment of the final exhibition.

Conversely careful consideration needs to be given in the amount of work that is selected for display. In some folios there appeared to be too much work on the wall weakening the overall visual impact.

In other folios some of the best work was on the floor included in the support material, limiting the potential scope of the display. On the flip side of too many pieces an interesting observation was the number of students producing only 5 pieces, a carryover from the 2020 TASC COVID-19 external assessment adjustments.

Students are discouraged from ‘window dressing’ their displays with addition of extraneous materials. Unless a rationale is clearly articulated in the proposal the use of found objects utilised as decorative objects to enhance artwork proves detrimental and distracts from the overall visual cohesion of the display.

The success of the proposal is reflected in the final exhibition. There were many outstanding examples reflecting detailed attention given to the presentation of displays, with the integration of technology and sophisticated and innovative design solutions. An exemplary standard will be evident in the visual impact and the cohesive strength of technical, stylistic and conceptual elements – convincing in all aspects to effectively communicate the aims of the studio proposal.

The refinement and quality of final displays is critical to the overall success of the student’s exhibition. The exhibition hang is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their design skills and evidence of planning and display layout options need to be documented in their diaries.

## Criterion 2: Communicates Artistic Concepts

*‘This criterion examines the degree and depth of understanding in the communication of artistic concepts evident in the support material, research and finally in the student’s exhibited artwork and statement.’*

### ***TASC External Assessment Guidelines***

The communication of conceptual content is reliant on a candidate’s capacity to develop a meaningful artistic context through relevant research and investigation. An exemplary folio will often tick every box but when the conceptual content is further analysed it falls down on this criterion with some being entirely technique driven or the concept being retrospectively applied. Less successful folios gave the viewer the responsibility for creating the concept by suggesting that the concept was open to the viewer’s own interpretation.

This criterion remains a challenge for many students and would benefit from more explicit teaching of idea generation and concept development.

*To attain an ‘A’ rating against this criterion the conceptual content needs to be:*

- *communicated convincingly in the actual work*
- *developed overtime and documented in the support material*
- *investigated and reflected in the Research Paper*
- *documented on the VSO*
- *clearly articulated and communicated in the artist statement*
- *avoid being overlaid and applied retrospectively to the work at the end of the year.*

One area of concern with the artist statements continues to be a degree of confusion around the proposal and the statement. In several examples the Art Statement contained identical content to the proposal reflecting a disregard or apparent lack of understanding of the course requirements.

*'The Artist Statement is a short (150 -300 word) statement to convey the conceptual meaning and context of the student's exhibition. It represents a communication between the artist and the audience and does not include details of technical processes. It must be displayed with the exhibition work.'*

### ***TASC External Assessment Guidelines***

The most successful artist statements were brief, concisely written and clearly communicated the key ideas. Many were too long or lacked conceptual depth and clarity or were just confusing and needed editing. It is important that teachers guide students through the process of writing their artist statement but also be mindful that a student's voice can be lost when over edited by teachers. Concepts that reflected personal meaning and a genuine link to the student's experience enabled them to articulate their aims much more clearly. Students are encouraged to develop their writing skills to communicate their ideas in an authentic, clear and concise manner.

The commonality of conceptual themes that emerge every year across the state is largely driven by the candidates' demographic, personal interests, social-media and the influence of the internet. Introspection and a focus on emotional issues and the importance of family remain key themes reflecting the ongoing disruption, uncertainty and the impact of COVID-19 during 2021.

Popular and reoccurring themes to emerge this year included self-portraiture, climate change, environmental issues, street art, home and family, androgyny, gender, sexuality, feminism, interior spaces, abstraction, cultural diversity, relationships, pop art, surrealism, nature and musical icons, the metaphoric cave, animal welfare, love of dogs, horror, gore and nightmares.

## **Criterion 6: Apply the Principles of Reflective Practice**

The reflective practice criterion for this course requires the production of a range of supporting evidence that demonstrates a rigorous engagement with the development of conceptual content, technical exploration, artist research and relevant investigations appropriate to the individual's student's self-directed inquiry.

*'Reflection needs to be thorough, relevant and thoughtful. Evidence will include a thorough and meaningful VSO reflecting the interconnections and progressive development between research investigations and the making process. Support material will be extensive and should include visual diaries, evidence of active investigations documented experiments and evidence of sustained involvement.'*

### ***TASC External Assessment Guidelines***

In a few schools there remains the tendency for the over production and exaggeration of the work requirements for this criterion. This is evident in the mass production of multiple scrap books and visual diaries without relevant artist research or meaningful annotations.

There is no mandated requirement for students to produce 4 or more diaries to attain an 'A' rating against this criterion. Building an authentic and relevant art context specific to the student's individualised area of investigation which reflects a depth of research and development overtime is however important. The focus on quantity is often at odds with the quality reflected in the actual artwork.

Notwithstanding the COVID 19 context, the range of evidence for the active investigations should ideally reflect a student- initiated approach with research undertaken in the wider arts community outside the scope of the classroom.

As such the evidence provided will be different and individualised for every student and reflect the self-directed inquiry component integral to the course. The inclusion of teacher directed essay tasks is problematic and a misrepresentation of the intentions of this course requirement. A range of evidence is appropriate here but simply highlighting pages of print outs of internet text as research is a worrying trend and indicates that more substantial research is required.

The artist interview, although not mandated, remains a valuable exercise providing evidence of engagement with the world of professional art practice and serves to inform a student's own practice in a meaningful way.

*Documentation of active investigations, including but not limited to:*

- *Display folders*
- *Interviews with artists/curators/gallery directors/art industry professionals*
- *Email documentation*
- *Analysis of artworks*
- *Photographic documentation*
- *Exhibition reviews*
- *Commentary on exhibition hangs*
- *Relevant art events/local/national/international*
- *Catalogues/catalogue essays*

### ***TASC Art Studio Practice Assessment Guidelines***

While in most schools there is a consistent approach to the production and format of the VSO (visual schematic overview) there is still a tendency to prioritise technical processes over artistic influences and key conceptual developments during the year. The VSO is intended to be primarily a visual tool and contain only brief annotations to guide the viewer through the origins and development of ideas. VSOs that consist entirely of examples of the students own work, refer only the technical process or contain unlimited text print outs without any reference to the influence of artists or artworks are to be strongly discouraged.

*'The Major Research Paper will demonstrate the depth complexity of your conceptual knowledge and will establish the artistic context for your body of work and final exhibition (minimum 3500 words). The paper must be identified with a cover page that includes a title and word count.'*

### ***TASC External Assessment Guidelines***

This year the standard and presentation of the Major Research Paper was noticeably inconsistent. Many papers were under the word count or titled carelessly or incorrectly; 'critical analysis' or 'Major Essay' or 'Research Essay' or without any specific title as stipulated in the course guidelines. A formal cover page, with a relevant title for the paper, a course code and word count images and a bibliography are basic requirements.

The Major Research Paper should represent a degree of rigour in the level of theoretical research undertaken, rather than consisting of entirely reflective comments written in the first person. The research enables the student to build an artistic context for their work. As such it would be expected that the paper be written predominantly in the 'third person' in addition to the 'first person' reflective comments when summarising key influences.

The Major Paper is a required evidence and represents a candidate's grasp of the context for their own work, the degree of conceptual depth and research and investigation undertaken during the course. It must be included in the support material to avoid impacting the overall rating on Criterion 6.

To maintain the integrity of the theory component of this course more rigour and attention to the assessment standards and course requirements is needed.

### Criterion 7: Use Artistic Techniques, Media and Technologies

This year there were many successful folios exhibiting a high to exceptional standard of technical skill and application of technologies across a range of specialised studio areas. This may be indicative of the tendency for many students to remain with the same studio specialisation over two years with the opportunity to further consolidate and refine their skills.

In the most outstanding exemplars, the aesthetic and conceptual aims were clearly articulated in the development and application of technical skills. This was demonstrated in the extensive exploration of materials/media and experimentation with technical processes evident in the reflective practice materials. By contrast in weaker folios there appeared to be extensive amount of work on the wall with little or no evidence of process and development of technique through experimentation or practice equivalent to their engagement in a 150- hour course.

In the presentation of conceptually based installations, the provision of appropriate levels of process documentation and reflective practice materials is critical to the success of folios in this medium. Some installations appeared to be reliant entirely on the collection of objects and memorabilia without providing evidence of considered planning in the development of ideas and art context.

Teachers and students are reminded that documented evidence of technical processes and development overtime is critical to attaining success on this criterion.

*'A student should have thorough documentation of strategies experimented with and employed in solving the aesthetic and conceptual problems in the activities of research reflective practice and art making.'*

#### ***TASC external assessment guidelines***

The predominance of traditional media, painting and drawing disciplines remain strong with some outstanding folios across a diversity of genres and mediums. Observational drawing, ink drawing and graphic illustration were popular with large scale paintings and drawings more prevalent than in previous years. Examples of abstraction were limited with fewer examples of photo realism and minimal evidence of life drawing represented.

The diversity of mixed-media folios incorporated a variety of craft techniques including stitching and embroidery. The use of pig and goat skins as a painting or drawing canvas was an unusual digression from the conventional surface material with examples appearing in both the north and south of the state.

Although there were only a few folios of printmaking at state level the standard was excellent with some strong examples of lino printing, intaglio, collagraphs and etching.

Ceramics continues to build in popularity across the state and it was exciting to see the ambitious scope and scale of sculptural installations with some outstanding exemplars in this medium. Glaze and surface decoration varied in degrees of refinement and the level of technical exploration and glaze experimentation evident in the support materials.

Examples of animation and video exhibitions were limited in number. Digital Art drawing and painting techniques appears to be the preferred style in the digital illustration space edging out Graphic Design where the few folios represented were of an excellent standard. Layout, typography and strong messaging communicating the content effectively.

Digital photography continues to dominate in preference to film with some evidence of photo montage and collage also represented. There was a level of inconsistency in photography folios with varying standards in the exploration of design elements, use of composition, pictorial depth, manipulation of light and a general lack of refinement in the use of conventions. Students are reminded to provide evidence of a sufficient number of photoshoots and (equivalent to 150-hour course) with documentation of technical processes, screen shots of tutorials or technical experiments reflecting development overtime.

This year technology based and experimental folios although few in number provided an element of difference in the creative presentation of exhibits. The application of innovative technologies such as laser cutting 3D printing AR and VR experimental technologies in the context of a self-directed inquiry and studio investigation presents an exciting opportunity for potential growth in this area.

Teachers are encouraged to promote the rigour of the course and continue to challenge their students to engage with contemporary art practice and emerging technologies through embracing a 'risk taking' approach in the experimentation and developmental process.

Congratulations to all Art Studio Practice students who successfully completed the course and exhibited their work in 2021 during what must be acknowledged has been a challenging and uncertain time. Overall, the level of diversity and quality of the exhibitions is indicative of the commitment and dedication of both teachers and students in maintaining and continuing to promote exemplary levels of attainment at state level.

A sincere thankyou to our colleagues in all schools and colleges for the support and collegiality extended to the members of the Art Studio Practice assessment panel this year.

We look forward to the ongoing and successful delivery of Art Studio Practice in 2022.